

OLVER OPPOSES WARRANTLESS SPYING ON AMERICANS

February 07, 2006

WASHINGTON, D.C. ,Congressman John W. Olver (D-1st District) has signed a letter to President Bush.

"Despite assertions by the president and his administration to the contrary, Congress has not given authorization for the NSA to conduct warrantless surveillance of Americans."

Three days after September 11, 2001, Congress passed the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF).

The NSA surveillance program remains largely secret due to its highly classified nature. Nevertheless, Congress has the right to know what the president is doing.

Olver added, "Despite the clear legal uncertainty as to whether this kind of domestic surveillance program is constitutional, the president has acted unilaterally."

These acts of surveillance have generated the concern of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act ("FISA").

The text of the letter is below.

January 31, 2006

President George W. Bush

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Seven days after our country was attacked on September 11, 2001, Congress exercised its authority under the Constitution to authorize the use of force against the perpetrators.

During your press conference on December 19, 2005, you stated that you were granted the legal authority to conduct warrantless surveillance of Americans.

The NSA Surveillance program remains largely secret due to its highly classified nature. However, Congress has the right to know what the president is doing.

At no point during the floor debate of the AUMF Resolution was there any discussion that the authorization was intended to grant the president the authority to conduct warrantless surveillance of Americans.

It is our duty to uphold the provisions of the U.S. Constitution, preserve the system of checks and balances, and ensure that the president is acting within the law.

Sincerely,

Rep. Neil Abercrombie

Rep. Michael Capuano

Rep. Julia Carson

Rep. Donna Christensen

Rep. John Conyers

Rep. Danny K. Davis (IL)

Rep. Peter Defazio

Rep. Bill Delahunt

Rep. Lloyd Doggett

Rep. Chaka Fattah

Rep. Sam Farr

Rep. Bob Filner

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Rep. Barney Frank
Rep. Raul Grijalva
Rep. Maurice Hinchey
Rep. Michael Honda
Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson
Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick
Rep. Dennis Kucinich
Rep. John Lewis (GA)
Rep. Jim McDermott
Rep. James McGovern
Rep. Carolyn Maloney
Rep. Edward Markey
Rep. Martin Meehan
Rep. Gregory Meeks
Rep. Gwen Moore (WI)
Rep. Jerrold Nadler
Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton
Rep. Major Owens
Rep. John W. Olver
Rep. Frank Pallone
Rep. Donald Payne
Rep. David Price (NC)
Rep. Charles Rangel
Rep. Bernard Sanders
Rep. Jan Schakowsky
Rep. Bobby Scott
Rep. Jose Serrano
Rep. Hilda Solis
Rep. Fortney Pete Stark
Rep. Bennie Thompson (MS)
Rep. John Tierney
Rep. Edolphus Towns
Rep. Maxine Waters
Rep. Diane Watson
Rep. Melvin Watt
Rep. Robert Wexler
Rep. Lynn Woolsey